



**CAREER COMPASS**

Steer Your Career. Accelerate Our Mission.

# **Making Strategic Thinking Part of Your Daily Routine**

**Participant Workbook**

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# Introduction

## Objective

- You will be able to understand what strategic thinking is, practical ways to improve your strategic thinking, and how to make strategic thinking part of your daily life.



## Agenda

- What is strategic thinking?
- Key components of strategic thinking
- Amazon's "Day 1" Mentality
- Practical ways to improve your strategic thinking
- How to make strategic thinking part of your everyday life

## What is Strategic Thinking?

- Strategic thinking involves long-term planning for the future.
- It is an intentional and rational thought process that focuses on the analysis of critical factors and variables that will influence the long-term success of an organization, a team, or an individual.

- Harvard Business Review

*We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking  
we used when we created them.*

- Albert Einstein

## Chat

***In your current role, do you conduct long-term planning for the future? If so, please provide some examples. If not, how do you think you could integrate long-term planning into your routine?***

## Key Components of Strategic Thinking

1. Seek fact-based, logical information
2. Question unquestioned assumptions
3. Create solutions without expending additional resources
4. Embrace the unpredictable



### 1. Seek Fact-based, Logical Information

- Be uncomfortable with vague concepts
- Avoid generalized theories of budgetary constraints
- Try to understand the underlying dynamics
- Look at data in an unbiased way



### 2. Question Unquestioned Assumptions

- Seek opportunities
- Challenge assumptions
- Question the status quo to improve efficiency



### 3. Create Solutions Without Expending Additional Resources

- Craft improvements within given constraints
- Achieve results with low or no cost
- Gain consensus and support for your improvements



### 4. Embrace the Unpredictable

*“In strategy, the longest way around is often the shortest way home.”*

- Basil Henry Liddell Hart (military strategist)

- Look for creative ways to achieve strategic success - it’s usually not obvious
- Understand that it may take additional effort or time



## Chat

***Of the four Key Components of Strategic Thinking we just covered, which is the most challenging for you and why?***

- 1. Seek fact-based, logical information***
- 2. Question unquestioned assumptions***
- 3. Create solutions without expending additional resources***
- 4. Embrace the unpredictable***

# Amazon’s “Day 1” Mentality

- Amazon CEO (Jeff Bezos) “Day 1” business outlook
- The Day 1 mentality - treat every day like it’s the first day of a new startup
- Attack every day, search for ways to become and stay relevant to your customers
- Helps to avoid being stagnant; you continue to evolve



## Four Essentials of “Day 1” Mentality

1. **True Customer Obsession**
  - Everyone you work with is your customer
2. **Resist Proxies**
  - Past success does not equal future success
3. **Embrace External Trends**
  - Seek ways to do things better and more efficiently
4. **High-Velocity Decision Making**
  - Stay energetic and dynamic in your decision making



## How the “Day 1” Mentality Applies to Strategic Thinking at NAVFAC

- **Amazon** True Customer Obsession ➡ **NAVFAC** Upgrade the Customer Experience
- **Amazon** Resist Proxies ➡ **NAVFAC** Remain Hungry for Success
- **Amazon** Embrace External Trends ➡ **NAVFAC** Increase Efficiency
- **Amazon** High-Velocity Decision Making ➡ **NAVFAC** Make Decisions with Lasting Effects

## Workbook Exercise

***From the NAVFAC translations of the “Day 1” mentality, what do you think is most valuable to your strategic thinking?***

- ***Upgrade the Customer Experience***
- ***Remain Hungry for Success***
- ***Increase Efficiency***
- ***Make Decisions with Lasting Effects***

## Practical Ways to Improve Strategic Thinking

1. Know: Observe and Seek Trends
2. Think: Ask the Tough Questions
3. Speak: Sound Strategic
4. Act: Make Time for Thinking and Embrace Conflict



### 1. Know: Observe and Seek Trends

- Build a solid understanding of industry trends and drivers
- Establish a routine to explore / integrate trends
- Be proactive about connecting with peers
- Understand the unique perspective of your function and its impacts on the organizational strategy



## 2. Think: Ask the Tough Questions

- How do I broaden what I consider?
- Is prior experience limiting my strategic vision?
- Be curious, look at information from different viewpoints
- Ask questions that seek different possibilities, approaches, and potential outcomes



## 3. Speak: Sound Strategic

- Speak the language
- Prioritize and sequence thoughts
- Structure communications to help the audience focus on the strategic message
- Evaluate underlying assumptions and frame strategic choices



## 4. Act: Make Time for Thinking and Embrace Conflict

- There is no time to think strategically with a packed schedule
- Make time to reflect on issues and ponder options
- Prioritize based on urgency and importance, block out time on your calendar to focus strategically
- Embrace debate and pushback; use these to refine strategic thinking on the most impactful outcomes



## Workbook Exercise

**Rank your level of competency on the 4 elements we just covered:**

- **Know: Observe and Seek Trends**
- **Think: Ask the Tough Questions**
- **Speak: Sound Strategic**
- **Act: Make Time for Thinking and Embrace Conflict**



# Make Strategic Thinking Part of Your Everyday Life

- Identify the strategic requirements of your role
- Uncover patterns to focus resource investments
- Invite dissent to build others' commitment.



## Identify Strategic Requirements of Your Role

- Know how your position supports your team's success
- Know how your team fits into achieving NAVFAC's vision
- Create an action plan to increase individual and team strategic contributions that support NAVFAC's strategic goals



## Uncover Patterns to Focus Resources

- Understand your strategic contribution
- Identify resources needed to focus on improving strategic contribution
- Invest in your long-term development and strategic growth
- Work your plan and adjust as needed



## Invite Dissent

- Seek feedback, debate, and even dissent to refine your strategic outlook
- Strategic thinking and insight is a team sport
- Allow others to have vested interest in the strategic plan
  - Generates support and commitment
  - Creates ownership throughout the team



## Chat

*How can identifying the strategic requirements of your role, uncovering patterns, and seeking feedback help you improve your strategic thinking?*

## Summary

- What is strategic thinking?
- Key components of strategic thinking
- Amazon’s “Day 1” Mentality
- Practical ways to improve your strategic thinking
- How to make strategic thinking part of your everyday life



## Key Takeaways

*What are some of the key takeaways from today’s course?*

## Final Reflection

What actions can you take now to improve your ability to make strategic thinking part of your daily routine?

*Use the space provided to capture your response.*

## Course Credit

You will receive credit for participating in this course. Email the address below. Make sure to include all the following information:

Component	Include in Email
<b>Address</b>	W_NAVFAC_PRTN_NITC_NFI_ADMINS_US@navy.mil
<b>Email Subject Line</b>	Self-Certification – Making Strategic Thinking Part of Your Daily Routine
<b>Course Name</b>	Making Strategic Thinking Part of Your Daily Routine
<b>Course Completion Code</b>	a3AaHC

Or, if you have a smart phone, you can simply scan the QR code below to generate the email with all the necessary information. If you use this method, please include your Navy email in the body of the email.



## Contact Information

**BD17 Contact Information:** Write to us! We are always seeking to improve our learning and development products and encourage your feedback. Please email us with your suggestions and we will incorporate them into future work. Additionally, we are available to answer any questions about the content you may have and provide additional resources to support your learning endeavors.

- NAVFACHQTotalForceDevelopment@us.navy.mil

## Development Resources

**Career Compass Resource Center:** An online source of information that provides NAVFAC civilian employees access to professional growth and development opportunities.

- <https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Careers/Career-Compass-Workforce-Development/Career-Compass-Resource-Center/>

To access more content specific to the **Strategic Thinking** competency:

- <https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Careers/Career-Compass-Workforce-Development/Career-Compass-Resource-Center/Competency-Development-Content/Strategic-Thinking/>

**Career Compass Catalog:** an online tool which provides you with information to help you take ownership of your professional development. It identifies options to assist in planning and creating a successful career path within NAVFAC.

- <https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Careers/Career-Compass-Workforce-Development/Career-Compass-Resource-Center/Career-Compass-Catalog/>